



File Code: 1950
Date: July 8, 2011

Dear Reader:

This letter is to inform you that the Ogden Vegetation Management Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been completed and is now available for review and comment. This letter provides a brief summary of the project, information on the official 45-day public comment period, and how to obtain a copy of the DEIS.

The 26,521-acre Ogden project area is located on the western flank of the Newberry Caldera, approximately 12 miles south of Bend, Oregon. The Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) allocates the project area primarily to General Forest management, but also to Scenic Views, Old Growth, and Eligible Wild and Scenic River. Several popular recreation sites such as McKay, Ogden, and Prairie campgrounds, and the Peter Skene Ogden National Scenic Trail are located within the project area.

The Forest Service proposal to conduct vegetation and fuels management in the Ogden project area, which is intended to protect and maintain valuable natural resources and recreational opportunities, was announced to the public in December 2009.

Alternatives Considered

Following scoping of the proposed action, the interdisciplinary team developed an additional action alternative to address concerns brought up by the public. The proposed action (Alternative 2) would treat about 14,182 acres, and Alternative 3 would treat about 12,947 acres. The following table displays the kinds of tree harvest to occur under each alternative. Fuels treatments may occur alone or in combination with thinning/harvest.

Table 1. Activities by Alternative

Activity	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Regeneration Harvest	0	1,365	954
Thinning (outside RHCA and Goshawk PFA)			
Lodgepole & true fir maintained to meet min. stocking levels	0	10,083	4,270
Lodgepole and true fir retained to meet lower management zone stocking.	0	7	5,154
Thinning within RHCA	0	248	212
Thinning within Goshawk PFA	0	0	343
Thinning small trees	0	2,115	2,014
Fuels – Mowing, ladder fuel reduction, and/or prescribed underburning	0	11,772	9,138



Table 1 shows that under Alternative 2, more of the area thinned to favor ponderosa pine will be brought down to minimum stocking level; whereas under Alternative 3, more of those stands will retain lodgepole and white fir to keep stands at the lower management zone stocking levels. This means that by removing more lodgepole and white fir in stands under Alternative 2, there will be fewer residual trees per acre than under Alternative 3 where more lodgepole and white fir will remain.

Another key difference between the alternatives is that Alternative 3 will involve some thinning within goshawk post-fledgling areas (PFAs) in order to promote the larger tree structure and reduce wildfire risk within the PFA. The trade-off is having more short-term impacts such as disturbance and a more open canopy than under Alternative 2.

The DEIS describes these and other effects of the alternatives in detail. You will find a copy of the DEIS on the Forest Service Website at: http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/project_content.php?project=31006. If you prefer a hardcopy of the document, please contact Beth Peer at (541) 383-4769.

Opportunity to Comment

A Notice of Availability for the 45-day public comment period for this project is expected to be placed in the [Federal Register](#) on July 22, 2011. The 45-day comment period will begin on the date of publication of this notice. Do not rely on any other source for the beginning date of the comment period. A legal notice will be published in *The Bulletin* newspaper following publication of the Notice of Availability.

Comments should be addressed to Shane Jeffries, District Ranger, Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District, 1230 NE 3rd Street, Suite A-262, Bend, Oregon, 97701.

Comments can also be faxed to (541) 383-4700, sent electronically to comments-pacificnorthwest-deschutes-bend-ftrock@fs.fed.us, or hand delivered to 1230 NE Third Street, Suite A-262, Bend, Oregon between 7:45 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

For email submission, the comments must be submitted as part of the actual email message, or as an attachment in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), rich text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf) only. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, verification of identity will be required. Emails submitted to email addresses other than the one listed above, or in formats other than those listed, or containing viruses, will be rejected. It is the responsibility of the commenter to confirm receipt of comments submitted by electronic mail. Please enter "Ogden Project DEIS Comments" into the subject line of your email.

Comments, including attachments, must be postmarked or delivered within 45 days of the publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register, in order to be eligible to appeal. The publication date in the Federal Register is the exclusive means for calculating the time for comment. Those wishing to comment on this project should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Anyone wishing to obtain additional information on the project or to provide comments over the phone should contact Beth Peer, Project Leader at (541) 383-4769.

Sincerely,

/s/ Brant Petersen
BRANT PETERSEN
Deputy District Ranger